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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BERLIN 000470

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SUBJECT: GERMAN VIEWS ON THE APRIL 27-28 EU GAERC MEETING  
  
REF: APRIL 17 GIAUQUE E-MAIL

Classified By: POLITICAL MINISTER COUNSELOR JEFF RATHKE. REASONS: 1.4 (B) AND (D).

11. (C) SUMMARY. Germany regrets the confusion that the Czech EU Presidency has caused over the status of Belarus President Lukashenka's invitation to the May 7 Eastern Partnership Summit, and agrees that it is important to ensure that he does not attend. The German MFA says it favors inviting Russia as an observer to the May 8 Southern Corridor Energy Summit; the Czech embassy confirms that there has been "strong pressure" from Germany to extend an invitation. The MFA would have also supported inviting Russia as an observer to the Eastern Partnership Summit to demonstrate that the EU is not trying to marginalize Russia in pursuing these initiatives, but the Chancellery was dead set against that idea from the very start. The GAERC will issue conclusions calling on Iran to "seize the opportunity" for dialogue offered by the new U.S. Administration, but will not decide on or even mention the possibility of a tightening of EU sanctions. Germany supports preparations for the designation of additional Iranian entities, but says other EU members feel such a move would undermine efforts to establish a dialogue with Tehran. Germany is seeking to add Ukraine to the GAERC agenda, believing that the EU must be "vigilant" in following developments there closely. The ministers will have a general discussion of the Middle East peace process, but are not expected to make any decisions or issue any conclusions. The EU Common Position on Burma will be rolled over unchanged. Romania is expected to raise Moldova under any other business. END SUMMARY.

DEMARCHE

12. (U) Post delivered reftel points on the April 27-28 EU General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC) to MFA Deputy EU Correspondent Thomas Schieb on April 20 and followed up with him on April 22 to get his reaction.

GAERC AGENDA

13. (SBU) Schieb noted that the draft agenda for the GAERC had just been published by the Czech EU Presidency and included the following topics:

- EU Neighborhood policy
- Burma
- Follow-up to the April 5 U.S.-EU Summit
- Middle East peace process
- May 7 Eastern Partnership Summit

## IRAN

14. (C) Schieb said that while Iran is not a separate item on the GAERC agenda, it is supposed to be one of two issues discussed as part of the follow-up to the April 5 U.S.-EU Summit (the other issue being Afghanistan). Schieb noted that there will also be Council conclusions on Iran. The Czech EU presidency distributed a draft of the conclusions on April 21 and the EU Political and Security Committee (PSC) is scheduled to discuss them today (April 22). Schieb allowed us to read the Czech EU presidency draft, which welcomes U.S. willingness to engage directly with Iran and calls on Tehran to "seize this opportunity" to "engage seriously with the international community" to find "a negotiated solution" to the dispute over Iran's nuclear program.

15. (C) The draft mentions nothing about a possible tightening of EU sanctions through the designation of additional Iranian individuals and entities associated with proliferation. Schieb confirmed that there were currently no moves within the EU to tighten sanctions. He said that while Germany would have supported going forward with the preparation of such steps, a number of other countries -- he specifically named Spain, Austria and Sweden -- were reluctant because they thought it would be counterproductive and undermine efforts to establish a dialogue. Schieb added that there might also be "economic considerations" behind their reluctance.

## MAY 7 EASTERN PARTNERSHIP SUMMIT

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16. (C) Schieb expressed irritation at how the Czech EU Presidency had handled the public diplomacy aspects of Belarus President Lukashenka's invitation to the May 7 Eastern Partnership Summit. At first, the Czechs had announced that Lukashenka had been invited, then issued a correction that no formal invitation had been sent, before finally saying that an invitation had been sent, but not to Lukashenka personally. Schieb said MFA was in the embarrassing position of having to answer Bundestag inquiries without really knowing the situation. He claimed that they had not yet seen a copy of the actual invitation to Belarus, so they could not verify to whom it was addressed. Schieb said the bottom line, however, was to ensure that "Lukashenka doesn't show up" at the May 7 Summit.

## MAY 8 SOUTHERN CORRIDOR ENERGY SUMMIT

17. (C) Schieb said that Germany favored inviting Russia as an observer to the May 8 EU Troika Southern Corridor Energy Summit with Turkey, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan and Georgia. Schieb argued that excluding the Russians would give credence to their claims that the EU was seeking to conspire against them. For the same reason, Schieb said the MFA would have also favored inviting Russia to the Eastern Partnership Summit as an observer, but acknowledged that this was not likely at this point. (Comment: We are skeptical that the Chancellery, in fact, would have agreed to invite Russia to the May 7 Eastern Partnership Summit, even as an observer. Our contacts there have consistently and adamantly opposed the idea. End Comment.)

18. (C) A colleague at the Czech embassy confirmed that Germany, Italy and others were putting "strong pressure" on the Czech EU presidency to agree to invite Russia as an observer to the Southern Corridor Energy Summit, but claimed that this was "not yet 100% decided." He said that the Czech preference was not to invite the Russians since the whole point of the meeting was to discuss diversification of energy sources and suppliers. He also revealed that Turkey had refused to attend the Southern Corridor Summit unless it was also invited to the Eastern Partnership Summit. To avoid spurring a demand from Russia that it also be invited to the Eastern Partnership Summit, the Czechs decided to invite

Turkey in its capacity as an EU candidate country, along with Macedonia and Croatia.

#### BURMA

¶9. (C) Schieb confirmed that the Council would agree to a rollover of its Common Position on Burma without any changes. He said that foreign ministers would use the occasion, however, to reiterate their concerns about the situation there.

#### MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS

¶10. (C) Schieb said there would only be a general exchange of views and that no Council conclusions or decisions were expected. He noted there had been some dispute about whether it was even worthwhile including the MEPP on the agenda, given that there was "nothing new" at this point to discuss.

#### MOLDOVA

¶11. (C) Schieb said that Romania was likely to raise Moldova at the GAERC under any other business. He noted that the EU Special Representative for Moldova had briefed the PSC at its April 21 meeting on the riots following the recent election and the government's response. According to Schieb, the EUSR confirmed allegations of human rights abuses by the Chisinau government, and said this reflected "the deficits" in the country's political culture.

#### UKRAINE

¶12. (C) Schieb said that the Czech EU presidency had agreed with Germany's proposal that Ukraine be added to the GAERC agenda, so he was surprised that it was not included in the draft just published. Schieb said that while Germany did not have any concrete prescriptions for how the EU should help Ukraine, it was important for the EU to be "vigilant" and to follow developments there closely. He revealed that Germany may propose sending the EU Troika to Kyiv to consult with

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Ukrainian authorities and to encourage President Yushchenko and PM Tymoshenko to "call a truce" in their self-destructive political battle.

Anania